

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 1, 5, and 9 are amended, and claims 11-16 have been added. Support for the newly added claims 11-16 may be found, for example, on pages 11-14 of the present specification. The amendments are made to even more clearly define the claimed invention and do not add new matter. Reconsideration of the rejected claims in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 1-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over MORRIS et al. (US 7,216,144, hereinafter “MORRIS”) in view of SLUTSMAN et al. (US 7,177,905, hereinafter “SLUTSMAN”), and further in view of SHTIVELMAN (US 6,346,952, hereinafter “SHTIVELMAN”).

Initially, Applicant notes that the claims require that “the setup information is not visible on the guests' video game terminals” and “the setup information includes a password, which is communicated from the chairman's video game terminal to a server and/or the guests' video game terminals without modification” (as recited in independent claims 1, 5, and 9).

In contrast, MORRIS discloses a system for facilitating negotiations between users over a communications network. In this regard, MORRIS discloses a communication protocol, referred to as a “Rendezvous” protocol, which allows users to make proposals and counterproposals concerning particular activities, such as, for example, an online “chat” session, an online computer game, an online purchase, etc.

The protocol allows a user who receives an offer to, *e.g.*, chat on a particular subject, to accept, modify and/or reject the terms of the offer. The protocol further allows a user to transmit messages, referred to as “Evil” messages, registering displeasure with any proposal, counterproposal, or acceptance. An Evil message has a cumulative (and potentially exponential) effect upon a recipient’s ability to access the computer system’s resources. However, as conceded by the Examiner in the Official Action, MORRIS does not teach storing setup information for setting an area in a storage section of a chairman’s video game terminal. Furthermore, Applicant notes that MORRIS does not teach any of the other claimed aspects of the invention pertaining to the setup information, as recited, *e.g.*, in independent claims 1, 5 or 9.

Having acknowledged the shortcomings in MORRIS, the Examiner relies upon SLUTSMAN to teach the following aspects of the invention with regard to independent claims 1, 5 and 9: (1) storing setup information, (2) creating from the chairman’s terminal an invitation message, (3) receiving at the guests’ terminals access request signals, and (4) transmitting from the guests’ terminals to the database the access request signals. However, the Examiner concedes that even if MORRIS and SLUTSMAN were to be combined, the combination of the two patents would not disclose element (5), a database area storing chat messages. The Examiner, therefore, applies SHTIVELMAN to teach the feature of (5) a database area storing chat messages.

SHTIVELMAN discloses a method and apparatus for summarizing previous threads in a communication-center chat session. In this regard, the Examiner asserts that SHTIVELMAN uses a history database to record all interactions of each chat session in order to provide a threaded chat interaction.

However, Applicant disagrees that the cited publications disclose all of the elements of the claimed invention. Specifically, MORRIS, SLUTSMAN, and SHTIVELMAN (either singularly or in combination) fail to disclose or render obvious setup information that is not visible to a guest at his terminal and which is communicated amongst the chairman, server and guests without modification, where the setup information includes a password (as recited in independent claims 1, 5, and 9).

For this reason alone, Applicant submits that the cited publications fail to teach all of the elements of the claimed invention, and requests withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Furthermore, Applicant submits that the claim elements disclosed in newly added claims 11-16 are neither disclosed or rendered obvious by the cited publications (either singularly or in combination).

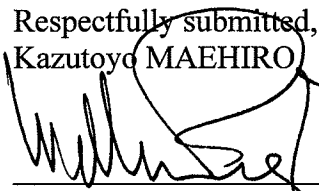
CONCLUSION

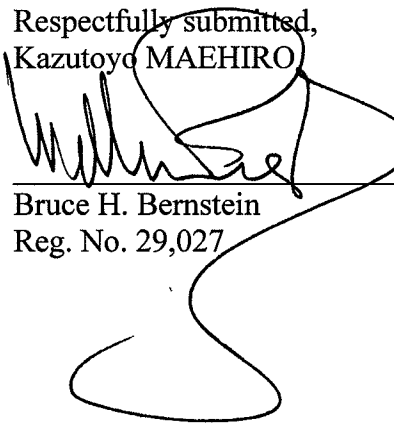
Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the outstanding rejections and an indication of the allowability of all of the claims in the present application.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this Response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

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